" Every effect has a cause/ is the axiom; but the words *cause* and *effect* are ambiguous, particularly the word *effect.* The aphorism understood in one sense is a mere truism or identical proposition, and may mean nothing more than that every " effect," that is, every phenomenon which has a phenomenon before it, has a phenomenon before it. But the proposition is more than a truism. What is mmnt by it ? What is the exact truth set forth ?

Dr. T. Brown, following out and connecting the speculations of Hume, has proven to a demonstration, that there is and can be nothing intermediate between cause and effect. He has shown that cause and effect are joined as the links of a chain, coming into immediate contact, and with nothing between. In doing so, he has cleared away much cumbrous and confusing error—but has ho established and clearly defined the positive truth ? With a mind of unequalled sharpness of edge, he could cut into parts that winch others thought to be indivisibles; but it may be doubted whether that edge, through its excessive keenness, was not sometimes bent back when directed to certain solid matters, which require to be inspected and described rather than to be divided or analyzed.*

He endeavours to prove that cause and effect have no other connexion than this —that the one is the invariable antecedent, and the other tho invariable consequent. We believe that no one disputes the existence of tho invariable sequence as at least one element in the relation. But it is not so universally acknowledged that there is nothing else. Most persons, unable, as they acknowledge, to say where the deficiency lies, have felt that the theory is bare and unsatisfactory; and that, if it does not miss the truth, it docs not at least give a full exhibition of it. It is poH.siUe that, in the theory under review, Dr. Brown may have got the truth, but not tho whole truth.

When we assert that every effect has a cause, so far as we do not play upon words, or utter a mere truism, we are affirming something in regard to *existing things.* We always rejoice to bring down abstractions to actual objects. When wo do so, we feel that we have a surer footing to stand on. Let UH come to existing things, and examine them with the view of determining what is really said of them, when we affirm that every effect has a cause.

Do we mean that every existing thing has a consequent, and every existing thing an antecedent, and both necessary, to use the old phraseology, or invariable, to use that of Brown ? Docs it mean that every existing thing (A) IH auccecded by an existing thing (B), arid that every existing thing (B) is preceded by an existing thing (A), and that this existing thing (A) will always bo followed by the existing thing (B), and, *vice versa,* that this given existing thing (B) has always the same existing thing (A) before it ? We doubt much if the mind is prepared at once to admit so broad an axiom as this, however expressed. Suppose there were nothing in the universe but some simple unformed substance, such as a piece of enrth or metal, would it have been followed by something else—or could we, on tho mere

inspection of such a substance, have argued that there must have been something before it ? Dr. Brown gives a clear, and, as it appears to us, right answer to this question, whon he says, " that matter, as an unformed mass existing without relation of parts, could not of itself have suggested tho notion of a Creator, wince in every hypothesis something material or mental must have existed uncaused, and mere existence, therefore, is not necessarily a mark of previous causation, unless we take for granted an infinite series of causes." (Phil, of Hum, Mind, Leek 92.)

* The language of Seneca (Be Bonef.,) applied to Ghryidpp UB the Stole, nay be applied to Dr. Brown—" Magnum nioherciile virum, sod tern en Graecum, cujus acumen nibmli t et in so aaepe replicatur, etiam cum agwo allquid pungit, nan per f oral."